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sitory, p. 353; "Bekleidung," p. 366; "Zeichen," the means of expression, p. 368; "Illusion," p. 388; the psychology of vision, p. 392; and many other short, as well as long comments on instructive and live esthetic themes.

It is too bad that the books described in many places in the Introduction and the Notes could not have been printed with the others at the end of the book. I refer especially to such books as Theodor Meyer, *Das Stilgesetz der Poesie*; Bryant, *On the Limits of Descriptive Writing*; the valuable articles which Professor Howard has himself contributed; and many others which are there referred to.

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KNOWLES-FAVARD, *Perfect French Possible*.
Boston: Heath, 1910. vi + 52 pp.

Those intending to use this little book should first read pp. 15-22, then return to pp. 1-14.¹ This lack of proper arrangement is unfortunate in a work that gives evidences of accurate knowledge and much study. Moreover, every teacher of French must sympathize with the aim of its authors; for they seek to teach pronunciation according to the results of recent scientific investigation but without using either technical expressions or special instruments. How far they have been successful is another question, however, and personally we cannot agree with their own statement that "no student of French can afford to do without this little book."²

To begin with, they have often been forced to build on insecure foundations. Given, for instance, the sound of *o* in French *côte* (international *o*), it is scientifically correct to form the *o* of French *donne* (intern. *o*) by lowering the tongue and reducing the lip-rounding;³ then, with both *o* and *o* given, one may, by combination with international *e* and *ε* produce intern. *ø* and *æ*.⁴ But the whole edifice is worthless unless the *o* of *côte* is properly mastered, and of this sound our authors are satisfied to say that it is the same as that of *o* in Eng. *ode*!⁵ Another serious defect in the very foundations of this system of French pronunciation is a lack of emphasis upon the far greater rounding of the lips in French than in

English. "Round the lips as for *ou* (Eng. *ooze*) and while holding them still and motionless try to say *i* (Eng. *eel*). The result will be *u*"⁶ (Fr. *rué*). It is, of course, unnecessary to point out that Fr. *ou* is not Eng. *oo* or to refer to Rousselot's "les lèvres très fermées."⁷ To teach the French nasals without having recourse to imitation is, we admit, difficult; but, as it seems hardly practical to tell students of French (not of physiology or phonetics) to "sing *à* for two beats, lower the soft palate, continuing two beats more,"⁸ we suggest as a starting point the "hm-lm" which is used so frequently in the United States instead of "yes" (or "no" according to the accentuation). At any rate, it is unwise to teach "*oin* = *ou* + *in* = Eng. *wang*" or, as is done twice, *ien* = *Yan* in Eng. *Yankee*.⁹ Such teaching leads the pupil to form an unfortunate habit which it is very hard to cure.

We cannot, then, agree with the preface that "it [this book] is unique in that it gives infallible rules for the production of those sounds that cannot be approximated in English." It is original, however, in the rule it gives for *e* mute: "the *e* of a mute syllable is not pronounced . . . when that syllable follows a vowel sound."¹⁰ Taken in its context, this rule is not bad, especially if we remember the limitations put upon it two pages later. But we must remember that this does not go to the root of the matter, that (rarely, to be sure) the *e* may be followed by a consonant combination such as will not allow the prefixing even of a single consonant; whence the mistake of our authors in pronouncing "*rec(e)voir*," while the correct pronunciation retains the *e* (Passy, *rəʒəvwar*), in striking contrast to *rec(e)vable* (*rəʒvabl*) and *rec(e)veur* (*rəʒvæ:r*).¹¹ The section on liaisons will answer many a question asked by our pupils every day; that on "linkings" might, we think, be reduced. A fifth and a sixth rule on page 35, under the heading "A liaison never occurs," would suffice to teach the student to pronounce *on est ici* but *Jea(n)est ici, après elle* but *ver(s) elle*; and that is all that is necessary. Those persons who believe that a Frenchman could make a guide stick to his own boat by repeating "pas d'elle y au Rhône que nous" will be interested in the supplement where "Cud eat eel" is said to represent the French translation for "What is he saying" and "Ray pay tale mow" = "Repeat the word." But, to speak only of rhythm, we would remind such persons that "in

¹ Exercises appear on these pages which require a knowledge of what follows, e. g., the pronunciation of *eu*¹ (p. 6) is not given till p. 19; of *oi* (p. 9) not until p. 21; likewise for *au*, *au*, *in*.

² *Perfect Fr. Poss.*, p. ii.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 19, designated by *eu*² and *eu*¹.

⁵ P. 17.

⁶ P. 18.

⁷ Rousselot and Laclotte, *Précis de Prononciation Française*, p. 37.

⁸ *Perf. Fr. Poss.*, p. 6.

⁹ P. 11 (note) and p. 20.

¹⁰ P. 29.

¹¹ V. Michaelis and Passy, *Dictionnaire phonétique de la langue française*.

French there is no such thing as word-stress or word-division,"¹² and that "en anglais on peut distinguer *an aim* (ən'eim) de *a name* (ə'neim)."¹³

In short, this little book is decidedly interesting; but, in order to profit by the good things it offers, a student must possess such a knowledge of French pronunciation as will permit him to use the sources from which the Perfect French Possible is drawn. And in that case, as the proverb goes, *Il vaut mieux s'adresser au bon Dieu qu'à ses saints*.

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CORRESPONDENCE

A SYNTACTICAL NOTE

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*,

SIRS:—In *Critical Contributions to Early English Syntax, Second Series* (Christiania, 1910), § 50, Dr. A. Trampe Bødtker calls attention to the opinions of Onions and Jespersen that the position of the preposition after the verb in a relative clause in M.E., as in Orm 3472 f.,

... þatt land
þatt Crist wass borenn inne,

is due to Scandinavian influence, and shows that the corresponding construction is found in OE. in a few cases. He also shows that the shift in order of relative verb and preposition is illustrated by the infinitive construction. In my paper on the syntax of the infinitive in Chaucer (*Chaucer Soc., Second Series*, 44, London, 1909), p. 29, I have quoted from Wülfing several OE. examples of the kind, and on pp. 33–34 I cite a large number of examples from Chaucer that show the shift of the preposition to a place after the infinitive. This seems to corroborate Bødtker's view that foreign influence need not be assumed in order to account for the construction.

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NEVER LESS ALONE THAN WHEN ALONE

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*,

SIRS:—'Who now reads Cowley?' asks Pope. 'Read all Cowley,' advises Wordsworth. A part of the erudition that has been displayed in *Modern Language Notes* (24. 54, 123; 25. 28, 96) concerning the phrase, 'Never less alone than when alone,' might have been spared by following the injunction of Wordsworth. I quote a passage

from Cowley's essay, *Of Solitude* (*Essays and Plays of Abraham Cowley*, ed. A. R. Waller, p. 392):

Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus, is now become a very vulgar saying. Every Man and almost every Boy for these seventeen hundred years, has had it in his mouth. But it was first spoken by the Excellent *Scipio*, who was without question a most Eloquent and Witty person, as well as the most Wise, most Worthy, most Happy, and the Greatest of all Mankind. His meaning no doubt was this, That he found more satisfaction to his mind, and more improvement of it by Solitude than by Company, and to shew that he spoke not this loosely or out of vanity, after he had made *Rome*, Mistriss of almost the whole World, he retired himself from it by a voluntary exile, and at a private house in the middle of a wood near *Linternum*, passed the remainder of his Glorious life no less Gloriously.

The description of Scipio's place of retirement is borrowed from Seneca (*Epist.* 86).

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BRIEF MENTION

The first number of an Italian quarterly review, *Studi Critici di Filologia e Glottologia*, has recently appeared, with Teofilo Petriella as editor.¹ It is also announced that the Abbé Rousset and H. Pernot are in charge of a new journal of experimental phonetics, the *Revue de phonétique*, which will be published in Paris.

Professor Friedrich Hanssen, of the University of Chile, has been known to us chiefly through his short studies on individual points of Old Spanish grammar and versification. Now we have the culmination of these shorter articles in the form of a *Spanische Grammatik auf historische Grundlage*,² which is a masterpiece of scholarship and patient research. While the Castilian and other dialects of Spain form the basis of the grammar, the author makes extensive use of the American Spanish dialects as corroborative material. In addition to the detailed study of phonology and morphology, the book is noteworthy for the treatment of syntax. The fund of illustrative material ranges from the earliest Spanish monuments to such recent authors as Blasco Ibañez, Valera, Echegaray, etc. An excellent word-index completes the volume.

¹ *Naples*: Discesa Sanità 20. Subscription, 15 lire per year.

² *Sammlung kurzer Lehrbücher der romanischen Sprachen und Literaturen*, VI. Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1910. 8vo., 278 pp.

¹² Sweet, *A Primer of Phonetics*³, p. 95.

¹³ Passy, *Les Sons du Français*⁵, p. 61.